

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **FY 2019 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program**

#### **Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0005590**

#### **Office of Global Educational Programs U.S. Study Abroad Branch (ECA/A/S/Q)**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Global Educational Program's U.S. Study Abroad Branch (ECA/A/S/Q) for the FY 2019 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program (hereinafter referred to as the "Gilman Program"). Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

### **I. STATEMENT OF WORK**

The FY 2019 Gilman Program will support the administration of approximately 3,000 awards to U.S. undergraduate students with high financial need, defined for the Gilman Program as Pell Grant recipients, to participate in credit-bearing study abroad and international internship programs. Approximately 75 selected students will also receive supplemental Critical Need Language Awards for studying critical languages, as outlined in the NOFO. Pending the availability of FY 2019 funds, ECA anticipates awarding a Cooperative Agreement of approximately \$12,500,000 to provide administrative support services for the FY 2019 Gilman Program.

This Cooperative Agreement will support administration of the Gilman Program and other programs and initiatives covered under the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000 for academic year 2019-2020 students, which includes four distinct program cycles: AY 2019-2020, fall semester 2019, spring semester 2020, and summer 2020. AY 2019-2020 and fall semester 2019 participants will have been previously selected by the FY 2018 Gilman Program award recipient. Responsibilities for program administration under the FY2019 award include:

- Program implementation, support, and monitoring in the field for participants during all academic year 2019-2020 cycles;
- Fiscal management for participants during all academic year 2019-2020 cycles;
- Recruitment and outreach to U.S. student applicants for the spring semester 2020, summer semester 2020, fall semester 2020, and AY 2020-2021 programs;
- Application and selection for the spring semester 2020, summer semester 2020, fall semester 2020, and AY 2020-2021 programs; and

- Support for all program alumni.

The implementing partner's responsibilities for this program include the following broad categories (detailed below):

1. Program Planning and Management;
2. Recruitment;
3. Outreach and Marketing;
4. Application Screening, Selection, and Awarding;
5. Fiscal Management and Disbursement of Funds;
6. Pre-departure and Re-entry Support;
7. Program Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting; and
8. Alumni Tracking and Engagement.

### **1. Program Planning and Management**

- In consultation with ECA, create and implement an overall timeline for all major programmatic activities, and develop detailed, quarterly timelines that include key milestones and final deadlines, providing sufficient time (at least one week) throughout the process for ECA review and clearance.
- Execute program-wide meetings to include a kick-off meeting with ECA and key personnel at the start of the award period to review programmatic and grant responsibilities.
- Conduct weekly meetings in-person or via virtual means with the ECA Program Officer and relevant personnel, and provide ECA with written minutes of these meetings along with any updates to deadlines or deliverables and the status of short, medium, and long-term activities.
- Develop policies and step-by-step procedures for each key functional component of the Gilman Program, including but not limited to, outreach and marketing, application review, selection and awarding, student monitoring, participant and alumni events and activities, termination and revocation of awards, and follow-on service projects. Provide detailed documentation of specific program policies and procedures upon request for review and approval by ECA.
- Provide Gilman Scholar data broken down into designated categories, such as number of scholars by destination country or home institution, as requested by ECA.
- Provide ECA with direct access to all Gilman-specific databases and IT systems (i.e. for applicants, alumni, advisors, etc.), and provide periodic electronic data uploads of participant statistics for ECA's participant and alumni databases. The implementing partner may contact ECA for additional information on the technical requirements for the data updates.

- Maintain current participant data electronically and in such a manner as to protect personally identifiable information (PII) under all applicable laws, including individual award amounts and fiscal year of funding. Required data fields for the electronic data system include, but are not limited to, the following: first name; middle name; last name; gender; date of birth; country of residence; field of study; home institution; fiscal year of funding; award amount; duration of program abroad; and home U.S. state; and Congressional district.
- ECA requests that the implementing partner maintain a comprehensive list of all Gilman advisors (designated campus representatives who work with the Gilman Program). The implementing partner must provide the full list of Gilman advisors to ECA upon request and post the list on the Gilman Program website to enable students to locate their local Gilman advisors. Campus representatives should have the option to “opt in” to this public online database when registering to serve as a Gilman advisor. The implementing partner should periodically review and analyze the Gilman advisor list for underrepresented geographic areas, institutional types, and other diversity factors. Outreach efforts should then be adjusted to fill any identified gaps.
- Publish and maintain the *Gilman Scholar Directory* on the public Gilman Program website. The public database should be searchable and include the name of the participant, field of study, home state, study abroad or international internship destination, and his/her U.S. college or university. Gilman Scholars should have the option to “opt in” to the public database on their application.
- Respond in a timely manner to inquiries about the program from prospective applicants and members of the public, academic institutions, and study abroad organizations.
- Identify and contract with outside consultants, in close consultation with ECA, to support programmatic resource and activity development, including print and online products and initiatives, trainings, and evaluation and assessment tools and resources.
- The FY 2019 Gilman Program award recipient should be prepared to work closely with the FY 2018 Gilman Program award recipient to maintain continuity of programming and operations for the FY 2019 program. This would include, but is not limited to, the maintenance and transfer of program, participant, and alumni data and contacts as needed for monitoring and reporting, including the required annual Gilman Congressional report.

## 2. **Recruitment**

- Propose a program-specific plan for U.S. recruitment that will generate a strong pool of qualified candidates representing the diversity of the United States. The proposal should be creative, comprehensive, and data-driven. Include a summary of the

methodology used to identify and target underrepresented locations, types of institutions, and groups of individuals to reach a broad representation of the U.S. population. The recruitment plan will be subject to ongoing coordination and approval by ECA staff and should be submitted no later than July 2019.

- The recruitment plan should include:
  - Proposed recruitment materials and activities (i.e. print and online content, social media, videos, conferences, workshops and campus visits, and other in-person outreach events). Materials should explain the purpose of the Gilman Program. As relevant and possible, materials should clearly outline the candidate selection criteria.
    - ECA branding guidelines require that all Gilman-specific recruitment materials reflect and prioritize the U.S. Department of State and Gilman Program branding identities, which should predominate in the materials. All materials must be submitted to ECA for final approval. ECA will retain copyright use of materials and will determine how and where to distribute materials related to this program.
  - An overall budget with estimated cost breakdowns by key strategy components such as materials, conference attendance, campus visits, etc.
  - A strategy detailing proposed travel by program staff and Gilman Alumni Ambassadors. (The Gilman Alumni Ambassadors Program is described under section 8 “Alumni Tracking and Engagement.”) This travel may include college/university visits and conferences and workshops.
  - A comprehensive, online calendar of upcoming conferences, webinars, workshops, college/university campus visits, and other activities pertaining to Gilman Program recruitment.
  - A timeline of proposed conference attendance and anticipated role (i.e. presenter, exhibitor, etc.) during AY 2019-2020, including deadlines for booth registrations and session proposals, if applicable. ECA’s preference is for comprehensive conference engagement that includes, but is not limited to, panel presentations, booth staffing, and meetings with key stakeholders. An ECA staff member may also participate in key conferences.
    - For events that involve multiple ECA exchange programs, the implementing partner should work closely with ECA program staff and relevant cooperating agencies, as directed, to ensure adequate coordination with and promotion of all relevant U.S. Department of State exchange programs.
  - A comprehensive plan to conduct a minimum of two Gilman regional advisor workshops under ECA’s direction. These daylong workshops will bring together Gilman advisors from diverse higher education institutions to learn and share best practices for recruiting and supporting Gilman applicants and alumni on campus. By sharing resources and building Gilman advisor networks, these training workshops aim to expand the breadth of institutions with successful Gilman applications.

- Conduct an open competition to identify qualified host colleges/universities for these workshops. Make recommendations to ECA for workshop locations based on quality of applications and analysis of areas that would benefit most from additional training and resources for Gilman advisors.
- Small travel grants should be made available to enable attendance by Gilman advisors without other means to participate in these activities.
- Training and promotional materials created for, or as a result of, these workshops should be made available online to reach as wide an audience of American college and university faculty and administrators as possible. The implementing partner should record best practices and other outcomes of workshop sessions to share as online resources as well.
- A plan for the development and dissemination of these online resources should be submitted to ECA two weeks prior to each regional workshop, and the materials should be sent to ECA for clearance two weeks following each workshop. The cleared resources should then be disseminated to attendees electronically and posted online.
- A strategy for implementing a minimum of two high-quality webinars on the Gilman Program and how to apply for Gilman advisors and applicants. The strategy should include proposed methods to track and analyze webinar usage. These webinars should also be recorded and shared online to reach as wide of an audience as possible. Other virtual recruitment strategies are encouraged.
- A proposal for a minimum of two high-quality promotional videos, both for specific recruitment purposes and for general program awareness, as directed and approved by ECA.
- The implementing partner may propose a recruitment plan that collectively highlights the Gilman Program alongside other USG programs. However, plans to include Gilman outreach together with non-USG programs and initiatives (including through social media engagement) will require advance approval from ECA, especially when relying in whole or in part on funding from this agreement. In all cases, the Gilman Program should be clearly labeled as a program of the U.S. Department of State.

### **3. Outreach and Marketing**

- Above and beyond outreach focused on recruitment, present a broad outreach and marketing plan that promotes the Gilman Program's purpose, value, and domestic and international impact to a general audience. This plan should include press and media engagement centered on raising the Gilman Program's profile and demonstrating its inclusiveness and innovative practices.
- In outreach and marketing materials, the U.S. Department of State and Gilman Program logos should be prominently featured. The recipient organization must include the following language at the bottom of printed materials: *"The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program is a program of the U.S. Department of*

*State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by <name of recipient organization>."*

- Devote adequate time and resources to garnering media attention for the Gilman Program through press releases and posts to relevant websites and social media platforms, etc., and through establishing contacts with reporters in major media markets and other markets in consultation with the ECA staff.
- Provide an overall budget and line item cost estimates for each component of the outreach and marketing plan. ECA must approve all elements of the plan before implementation.
- Compile and publicize an annual "Gilman Top Producing Institution" list that highlights top sending U.S. colleges and universities by size and other categories designated by ECA. Past lists have included categories such as first-generation college students, students with disabilities, and students in STEM fields. Present ECA with a communications plan for the announcement of the list, and work in close coordination with ECA program staff and ECA/PASC on related media engagement.
- Dedicate adequate resources to maintain, manage, and further develop an official Gilman website and social media accounts (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) for the Gilman Program, and closely follow ECA communications and outreach guidance. The implementing partner should actively use data to inform the content it promotes on the various social media platforms and consult with outside experts as needed, with the approval of ECA.
- The implementing partner must provide the ECA program office with login information for the Gilman Program social media properties, including user names and passwords. For crisis communications and because online communities and social media presences may exist beyond the period of the Cooperative Agreement, it is valuable for ECA to have continuous access. Additionally, the implementing partner should provide ECA with access to all Gilman-related Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and other social media analytics.
- Provide ECA with a monthly social media summary of Gilman Program features for ECA's social media properties and digital platforms, including the U.S. Study Abroad website. The social media summary should feature highlights of Gilman participants and alumni (from mid- and post-experience surveys and other sources), data visualization and infographics of program outcomes, and text and video content showcasing and amplifying the Gilman Program. It should not be a summary of the past Gilman social media postings but rather new and engaging content.
- Draft and prepare for distribution notifications to Members of the U.S. Congress and Governors of U.S. states and of Puerto Rico, as well as the Mayor of Washington,

D.C., about Gilman Scholars in their respective locales. Prepare notification letter drafts for ECA review by early September 2019 for all Gilman Scholarship awardees in AY 2018-2019; provide final notification letters and addressed envelopes ready for mailing to ECA by early December 2019; and maintain accurate and up-to-date records on Congressional membership.

- Draft for ECA review and clearance the annual Gilman Congressional Report for AY2018-2019 no later than early fall 2019 and for AY2019-2020 no later than July 2020, highlighting the Gilman Program's purpose, value, inclusiveness, innovations, and domestic impact, and featuring compelling evaluation and survey data and scholar stories. As required in the Gilman Program's founding legislation, the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000, the report must also include: 1) the number of participants; 2) the institutions of higher education in the United States that the participants attended; 3) the institutions of higher education outside of the United States participants attended during their study abroad; and 4) the areas of study of participants.

#### **4. Application Screening, Selection, and Awarding**

- Establish, maintain, and update an online application system to collect, store, and process data in support of program application and selection cycles. Ensure that the system is cost effective while still meeting all programmatic requirements, including data privacy protection. An alternate paper-based application should also be provided for candidates unable to apply online. These paper-based applications, however, must be entered into the online system by the administering organization program staff.
- Conduct optional applicant surveys collecting demographic information to assess the effectiveness of targeted outreach. Share results and analysis with ECA and use them to inform future outreach plans.
- Conduct a technical review of applications for eligibility and completeness.
- Plan and submit to ECA for approval a transparent, merit-based selection process with clearly identified criteria and a scoring matrix for assessing the Gilman applications. Preference should be given to applicants who are veterans of military service and to applicants with no previous study abroad experience. Convene a combination of virtual and in-person selection panels to recommend and rank candidates.
- Actively recruit qualified higher education administrators and faculty to serve as selection panelists, including panelists from community colleges, minority-serving institutions, and underrepresented states. Provide thorough and up-to-date training materials and resources for current and future panelists, and provide these resources to ECA for approval. Develop a mechanism to evaluate the application and selection

process and share analyses, results, and any suggested changes to recruitment and selection with ECA.

- Develop and implement best practices and training for program staff who serve as selection panel facilitators. These best practices and trainings should aim to ensure consistency and standardization across all selection panels. Standardized explanatory language, materials, or presentations for use by the facilitators may also be appropriate.
- The implementing partner should include ECA staff as resources at panel meetings and ensure that they receive information about the scheduling and make-up of all selection panels at least two weeks prior to the start of the meetings. All in-person selection panel meetings should take place in Washington, D.C. to allow for maximum ECA program staff participation.
- Present the final recommended participants and alternates to ECA for approval, providing an overall analysis of the results of the selection panels, including the number of participants by country, home state, institution type, and other categories as requested by ECA.
- Ensure that individual award amounts do not exceed the amount requested by the applicant while covering as much of the applicant's unmet need as possible within the current programmatic parameters. The implementing partner should ensure that Gilman Program funds do not duplicate funding that participants are receiving from other study abroad scholarship programs.
- Notify applicants of their status using ECA-approved notification letters, and inform ECA of any delays in the notification schedule. Notify Gilman advisors of their applicants' status.
- Present a plan to confirm that participants provide evidence of international insurance coverage (to cover illness, accident, medical evacuation, and repatriation of remains), U.S. citizenship (or certificate of non-citizen nationality), Pell Grant status, and registration in the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) before funding is disbursed.
- Ensure that participants comply with the Fly America Act when using Gilman Program funds to purchase international plane tickets.
- Consult with ECA in the development of terms and conditions and other rules and regulations for participants and ensure that participants receive and sign the terms and conditions document before funding is disbursed.



- Provide ECA with a final list of program participants as soon as possible and no later than at least two weeks before the beginning of each term, and update as needed during the award process.

## **5. Fiscal Management and Disbursement of Funds**

- Manage award disbursements for grantees via direct deposits to participant bank accounts.
- Track and document award terminations, revocations, and recouped funds gathered as a result of these actions, and report findings to ECA.
- Audit internal functions, system, and controls as necessary.

## **6. Pre-departure and Re-entry Support**

- Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information and pre-departure materials. Ensure Gilman Scholars have access to the pre-departure tools, templates, and materials while overseas.
- Conduct a comprehensive, virtual pre-departure orientation, covering health (including mental health), safety and security, intercultural training, adaptation strategies (particularly for students representing underserved U.S. populations), the role of citizen diplomats, social media and photography guidance, and program-specific information prior to departure. Ensure materials are recorded and made available to students on an on-going basis. Applicant organizations should also propose creative ideas on how to augment the information provided within these modules, as well as how these modules can be provided as a public resource for all Americans studying abroad.
- Conduct a comprehensive, virtual re-entry orientation on leadership, professional skills development, cultural readjustment, and the impact of an international experience on one's home community. Make re-entry tools, templates, and materials available to program alumni on an ongoing basis. Applicant organizations should also propose creative ideas on how to augment the information provided within these modules, as well as how these modules can be provided as a public resource for all Americans studying abroad.
- Prepare and distribute Gilman certificates of achievement and digital badges for participants following the successful completion of study abroad or international internship programs and their required follow-on service projects.

## **7. Program Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting**

- Provide a comprehensive participant monitoring strategy, including mechanisms to confirm that students arrive at their destination of study and complete the terms of their scholarship. The plan should include information on how the implementing partner will be monitoring and communicating with Gilman Scholars throughout the duration of their program abroad beyond basic emergency coordination. Present appropriate communication tools and monitoring techniques to reduce potential gaps in U.S. student monitoring overseas, including the use of electronic and virtual tools and options for scholars traveling to locations with technology limitations.
- Maintain regular communication with Gilman Scholars overseas and provide Gilman Scholars with access to 24/7 telephone contact and counseling service for use during emergency situations. Respond to all general inquiries within 24 hours. Inform ECA at the first sign of an emergency or potential emergency situation and work in consultation with ECA to resolve each situation.
- Work with ECA to develop and distribute virtual wallet cards to each Gilman Scholar with emergency contact information.
- Provide ECA with biweekly student monitoring reports showing the status of Gilman Scholars, including planned/actual departures and arrivals, status within country, and any relevant changes to location prior to program completion (including late arrivals/early departures and change of location for reasons such as personal travel during holidays, etc.).
- Assist with attendee selection and book travel and hotels for up to 120 Gilman Scholars to participate in several regional U.S. Department of State-administered workshops hosted by U.S. Embassies and/or Fulbright Commissions overseas focused on professional skills development and career advancement.
- When necessary, prepare appropriate documentation for ECA approval for the termination or revocation of a Gilman Scholarship award, and take appropriate action to recoup funds that may have been previously distributed to the participant. Notify ECA on the status and resolution of award terminations or revocations.
- Arrange for optional testing of oral language skills for the recipients of the Critical Need Language Award upon return. Provide ECA with reporting on cumulative results.
- ECA will work with the implementing partner to develop and employ a standardized, baseline, pre-experience evaluation instrument that will be issued to all Gilman Scholars prior to departure. These surveys are designed to help the award recipient and ECA assess the following: student satisfaction with the program; student attitudes and views; the extent of learning and skill development (including

leadership); impact of Gilman Scholars on their home and host communities; reliance on new learning and skills in their studies, at work, and in their communities; and their efforts to share new ideas, knowledge, and insights.

- ECA will work with the implementing partner to develop and employ a standardized, mid-experience evaluation instrument that will be issued to Gilman Scholars who are abroad for eight weeks or longer, assessing the same areas listed above.
- ECA will work with the implementing partner to develop and employ a standardized, post-experience evaluation instrument that will be issued to Gilman Scholars upon return to the United States.
- The pre-, mid-, and post-experience data should be systematically collected, analyzed, and presented to ECA. The survey reports should highlight trends and make programmatic recommendations based on the data.
- Pre-, mid-, and post-survey results should be aggregated and disaggregated for specific stakeholders, including but not limited to U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas, U.S. Department of State regional bureaus, and Congress. Personalized reports should also be made available to Gilman Scholars so they can track their personal, professional, and academic growth as a result of participation in the program. Aggregate reports for U.S. higher education institutions are also strongly encouraged.
- Provide periodic and ad hoc reports on program statistics including distribution of participants by country, region, field of study, award amounts, program provider, institution type, and length of study abroad program, as well as participant quotes and feedback, in print and electronic formats.
- Implement follow-up surveys with prospective individual recipients (or their respective institutions) that declined Gilman scholarships to determine if and how they were able to study abroad and share results and analysis with ECA on a biannual basis, highlighting trends and making program recommendations based on the data.
- Propose a plan for collecting, analyzing, and reporting impact data (including multiplier effect) from Gilman alumni one year from the end date of their award, and include possible methods for the long-term tracking of alumni.
- In consultation with ECA, utilize program alumni, or other consultants, to assist with impact studies as needed. Place special emphasis on surveys, software, social media (LinkedIn, etc.) and other data collection methodologies to determine the community impact and multiplier effect of Gilman Program participants. Propose ways to use

appropriate data from these survey findings to promote the program, such as infographics and one-pagers, and incorporate them into Congressional reporting materials.

## **8. Alumni Tracking and Engagement**

- Ensure confirmation of program completion, in accordance with the Gilman Program terms and conditions.
- Within six months of their return home, all Gilman recipients must complete follow-on projects that promote study abroad or the Gilman Program within their home institution or community. The implementing partner will work closely with ECA to develop mechanisms to track and report on these activities after each term. The implementing partner should provide ECA with complete follow-on project tracking reports and evaluation summaries on a regular basis and leverage content for Congressional reporting and other stakeholder engagement.
- Provide a plan for continued contact with Gilman returnees to ensure that they are tracked over time, organized as alumni, involved in outreach efforts, and offered opportunities for on-going programming and engagement to reinforce the knowledge and skills they acquired on the exchange. The implementing partner should ensure that adequate personnel resources are dedicated to the alumni function.
- Provide oversight of Gilman alumni activities to include:
  - building and maintaining a database of all Gilman alumni;
  - encouraging alumni to register on the U.S. Department of State's International Exchange Alumni website (<https://alumni.state.gov/>).
  - creating and/or sharing networking and professional development opportunities for Gilman alumni;
  - issuing Gilman Scholar digital badges to confirmed alumni, and implementing a strategy for increased alumni engagement on social media;
  - facilitating the creation and development of an independent, alumni-led national Gilman Alumni Society (association) to encourage alumni networking and other activities at both national and local levels;
  - creating and implementing a Gilman situational mentoring program that will connect current Gilman Scholars with the deep pool of Gilman alumni;
  - designing and implementing a longitudinal alumni survey; and
  - providing reports to ECA on all alumni activities.
- Maintain close coordination with ECA on operationalizing the President's Executive Order (13750) granting alumni of the Gilman Program Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) for federal hiring, including issuance of ECA-provided certificates to all program alumni who have successfully completed their program. Ensure that

applicants, participants, and alumni are aware of the benefits of NCE. Periodically share NCE job opportunities provided by ECA and/or other USG entities with Gilman alumni.

- Present a comprehensive plan to conduct a minimum of two one-day Gilman regional alumni workshops under ECA's direction. Gilman alumni workshops should focus on developing alumni's career readiness skills and include information on NCE for federal hiring for Gilman and other ECA alumni.
  - Conduct a competition to identify qualified host colleges/ universities for these workshops. Make recommendations to ECA for workshop locations based on quality of applications and analysis of areas that would benefit most from additional training and resources for Gilman alumni.
  - Make small travel grants available to the Gilman alumni who do not have the means to participate in these activities.
  - Training and promotional materials created for, or as a result of, these workshops should be made available online to reach as wide an audience of Gilman alumni as possible. Applicant organizations should also propose creative ideas on how to augment the information provided within these modules, as well as how these modules can be provided as a public service for all Americans studying abroad. The implementing partner should also record best practices and other outcomes of workshop sessions to share as online resources as well.
  - A plan for the development and dissemination of these online resources should be submitted to ECA two weeks prior to each regional workshop, and the materials should be made available to ECA for clearance two weeks following each workshop. The cleared resources should then be emailed to attendees and shared online.
- Implement a minimum of two high-quality webinars for Gilman alumni, and proposed methods to track and analyze webinar usage.
- Develop and oversee the Gilman Alumni Ambassadors Program, which selects 20-25 recently returned outstanding Gilman alumni to support the Gilman Program, including outreach and marketing. Manage the application and selection process of the AY 2019-2020 Gilman Alumni Ambassadors, in close consultation with ECA. Plan and execute an in-person Alumni Ambassadors' training in close consultation with ECA. Provide ongoing support to Alumni Ambassadors, including the provision of travel grants to those traveling in support of the program to campuses and/or conferences. ECA encourages applicant organizations to present creative ideas on how to leverage dynamic and enthusiastic Gilman alumni to support the Gilman Program and study abroad writ large, including supporting study abroad fairs.

## **ECA INVOLVEMENT**

In a Cooperative Agreement, ECA is substantially involved above and beyond routine monitoring. In this Agreement, ECA will be responsible for the following:

- Participating in the design and direction of all program activities;
- Approving key personnel;
- Approving and providing input on program timelines, agendas, and administrative procedures;
- Providing guidance in execution of all program components;
- Reviewing and approving all program recruitment, publicity, and outreach materials;
- Observing, but not participating in, selection panels;
- Approving the selection of participants;
- Approving decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program;
- Assisting with participant emergencies;
- Communicating and liaising within the U.S. Department of State and with U.S. Department of State Embassies and Consulates and Fulbright Commissions regarding the program and sending lists of outgoing Gilman Scholars to U.S. Embassy public affairs sections (PAS) around the world.
- Communicating and liaising with representatives from U.S. congressional and state-level offices.
- Coordinating with ECA/PASC to publicize the program through various media outlets. The ECA Program Officer will approve media outreach by the implementing partner, review all media requests for clearance, and review the nomination of Gilman Scholars and alumni to participate in media outreach regarding the program.
- Crisis Situations: In close cooperation with the implementing partner, the ECA Program Officer will be responsible for the Gilman Program's crisis management policy.

## II.

## PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

## PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

**NOTE:** Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)

Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

### Online Forms

- SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, "Assurances – Non-Construction Programs"
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

### Program Narrative

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources

6. Scope and Goals

- a. Number and description of participants
- b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
- c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
- d. Fields covered
- e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, selection, participant monitoring, alumni engagement, etc.)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

**Additional Information to be Submitted**

- Detailed Budget, with a cost breakdown of personnel services by position, and all allowable costs
- The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.
- Calendar of activities/itinerary, if applicable
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
- First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

**Please note:** All applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing



and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

## **REVIEW CRITERIA**

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

- 1. Quality of the Program Idea:** The proposal should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's priorities and mission.
- 2. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Program Objectives:** Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the applicant will meet the program's objectives and plans, while demonstrating innovation, productivity, and a commitment to academic excellence. The proposal should demonstrate a capacity for flexibility in the management of the program.
- 3. Follow-on/Alumni Activities:** Proposals should provide a strategy for maximizing the opportunities for alumni to further their study of the language and culture of the host country, presenting plans that are within the context of the grant (with Bureau support) and after its completion (without the Bureau's financial support). Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Proposals should provide a plan for continued contact with returnees to ensure that they are tracked over time, utilized and/or organized as alumni, and provided opportunities to reinforce the knowledge and skills they acquired on the exchange and share

them with others. Please refer to the POGI for additional guidance on alumni outreach and follow-on engagement.

**4. Institutional Capacity and Institution's Record/Ability:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals. The applicant should demonstrate well-established links to the scholarly and professional community in the U.S. and knowledge of foreign countries' educational environments as they apply to academic and professional exchange programs. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for any past Bureau grants as determined by the Bureau's Grants Division. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

**5. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing:** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible to maximize scholarship opportunities. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

**6. Support of Diversity:** The proposal should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity, as outlined in section D.3i. The proposal should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration, design, content, and implementation, including individual grantee/participant recruitment, selection, and destination. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan that outlines strategies for engaging students from diverse institutions, backgrounds, and geographies and does not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.

**7. Project Evaluation:** The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the success of activities, both as they unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other tool plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

## **FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY:**

### **ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA**

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division  
U.S. Department of State  
SA-4E (Bldg. 3)  
2430 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

**The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call Theresa Gagnon at (202) 632-6339, U.S. Study Abroad Branch, ECA/A/S/Q, Fax: (202) 632-9479; GagnonTF@state.gov.**